

The Board has duly considered the matter and concludes that this case is not in posture for decision. OWCP's procedures provide that cases should be administratively combined when correct adjudication of the issues depends on frequent cross-referencing between files.¹ For example, if a new injury case is reported for an employee who previously filed an injury claim for a similar condition or the same part of the body, doubling is required.²

Appellant had an earlier claim for an April 7, 2015 traumatic emotional condition, to which OWCP assigned File No. xxxxxx465. OWCP accepted PTSD as work related. File No. xxxxxx465 has not been administratively combined with the present file, OWCP File No. xxxxxx962. The medical evidence of record in OWCP File No. xxxxxx962, begins January 13, 2018 and does not contain prior medical evidence contained in OWCP File No. xxxxxx465. As such, the Board is unable to review the prior medical evidence relating to appellant's accepted condition of PTSD, which is the same condition which is contested in the present claim.

For a full and fair adjudication, the case must be returned to OWCP to administratively combine the current case record with File No. xxxxxx465.³ Following this and other such further development as it deems necessary, OWCP shall issue a *de novo* decision.

¹ Federal (FECA) Procedure Manual, Part 2 -- Claims, *File Maintenance and Management*, Chapter 2.400.8(c) (February 2000).

² *Id.*; *D.L.*, Docket No. 17-1588 (issued January 28, 2019); *K.T.*, Docket No. 17-0432 (issued August 17, 2018).

³ *K.T.*, *id.*

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT the August 16 and March 15, 2018 decisions of the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs are set aside and the case is remanded for further action consistent with this order of the Board.

Issued: August 22, 2019
Washington, DC

Christopher J. Godfrey, Chief Judge
Employees' Compensation Appeals Board

Patricia H. Fitzgerald, Deputy Chief Judge
Employees' Compensation Appeals Board

Janice B. Askin, Judge
Employees' Compensation Appeals Board